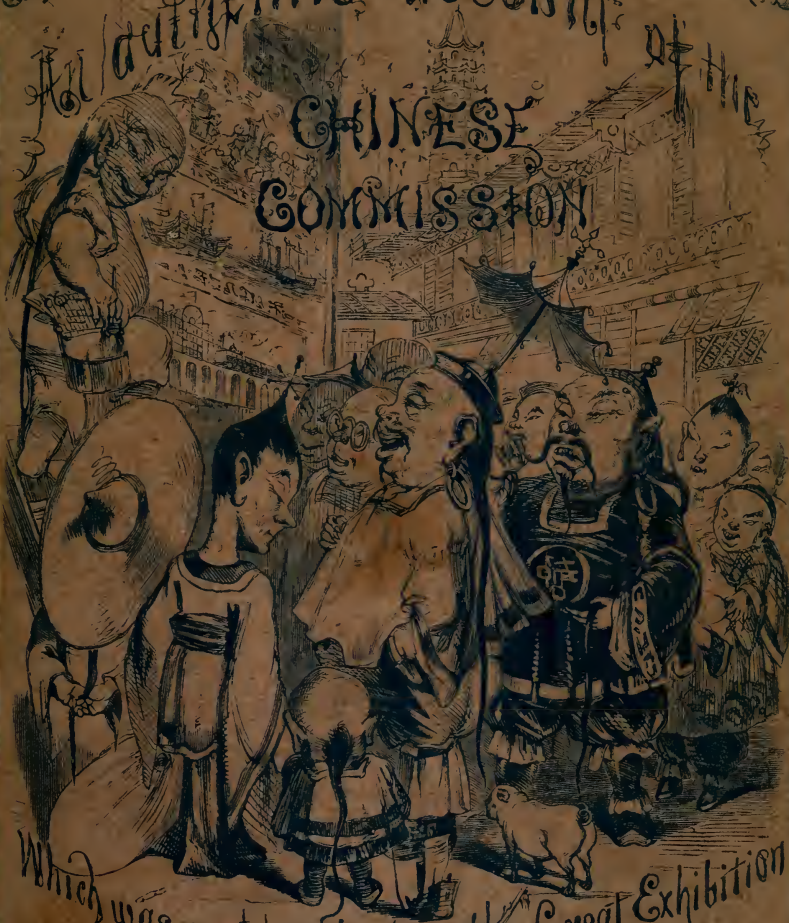


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An authentic account of the  
**CHINESE**  
COMMISSION



Which was sent to report on the Great Exhibition

LONDON: PRINTED AT 15 AND 16, GOUGH SQUARE,  
BY H. VIZETELLY, AND SOLD BY HIM THERE.





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ONE MORN THE CRYSTAL PALACE GATE  
I ENTERED MOST DISCONSOLATE.





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AN AUTHENTIC ACCOUNT OF  
THE CHINESE COMMISSION,  
WHICH WAS SENT TO REPORT ON  
THE GREAT EXHIBITION;

WHEREIN THE OPINION OF CHINA IS SHOWN  
AS NOT CORRESPONDING AT ALL WITH OUR OWN

THE WHOLE FROM THE CHINESE REPORTS NOW COLLATED,  
BY SUTHERLAND EDWARDS,  
AND BY HIM TRANSLATED,  
AND PUT INTO RHYME WITH ABOUT ENOUGH REASON  
TO SUIT THE DEMANDS OF THE HOLIDAY SEASON.

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---

A SHORT time ago,—if the period be dated  
In years, from the time when the world was created,  
'T was late in the autumn of 5854 ;  
But of course it was several centuries more,  
If we count from the rise of the great Chinese nation,  
The age of which mocks all correct calculation—  
In short, on the eve of the Great Exhibition,  
The Emperor of China sent out, on a mission,  
A man who 'd committed so heinous a crime,  
He was sentenced to stop in Great Britain some time,  
As a punishment fit for a wretch who could slaughter  
His grandmother, mother, his wife, and his daughter ;  
Thus, not only killing his nearest relations,  
But venting his spite upon four generations.

And the citizens shouted, when sentence was passed,  
To think that old Congou was punished at last ;  
For Congou—yes, Congou, the old and the rough—  
Was the name of the man, and it told well enough  
That into hot-water he frequently got,  
And that people were sending him always to pot.  
Well, the sentence was passed ; but, before very long,  
The Emperor fancied he might have done wrong—  
That England, on seeing so thorough a scamp,  
Would imagine the Chinese were all of his stamp—  
That if Congou were placed in so grave a position,  
They would all be exposed at the Great Exposition ;  
And whatever their foes might have basely invented,  
They were not quite so bad as they 'd be represented.  
From these painful reflections he suffered all day,  
And his friends suffered, too, in a different way ;  
For his illness, though trifling, caused general concern,  
And soon, though not mortal, towards death took a turn :  
As his very slight head-ache unhappily led  
To the prompt amputation of many a head.

The Emperor rose on the following day,  
And breakfasted in the most sorrowful way ;  
Then he went on the slopes, for his usual short walk  
(The subject of most of the Peking small talk) ;

But finding the bother of walking too great,  
He thought he 'd attend to some matters of state ;  
And when he 'd returned, we may just as well mention,  
He attended to these without paying attention.  
For instance, some ladies who 'd lately arrived,  
To appear at His Majesty's court had contrived ;  
And being " presented," the Emperor pretended  
To think that as gifts they had all been intended—  
Perchance in this case many people would find  
That it did n't quite prove he was out of his mind.  
But then when a play-house director applies  
For an audience, an Emperor can't be thought wise  
Who refuses an audience, because he thinks fit  
To imagine it's wanted for boxes and pit !  
He stopped not at playing such innocent pranks,  
As receiving young ladies at Court " with best thanks ;"  
For, half like a Spaniard and half like a Jew,  
Committing two murders and planning a " do,"  
He killed, in his anger, a couple of wives,  
After making his subjects ensure both their lives !  
A mandarin sat while the Emperor stood,  
And was made to sit down on a sharp piece of wood,  
As a penalty—not to say aught of the pain—  
Very likely to stop his so acting again.



Each deed was a farce, and, like many they play,  
Not at all of a nature to make people gay.  
The wildest absurdity marked every act;  
And although a good plot was a thing which he lacked,  
In less than an hour he invented a lot, \*  
And killed all concerned, whether guilty or not;  
Thus his actions, unless they supposed him insane,  
Formed a great Chinese puzzle, which none could explain.  
After this, as he felt in no better condition,  
He determined to call in and kill a physician.  
So Sing-Song was sent for, and he, with a groan,  
Said his physic as well to the dogs might be thrown.†  
And perceiving his Prince had some weight on his mind,  
He pretended, the balance of health if he'd find,  
He must throw off whatever thus pressed on his soul—  
Then the Emperor, as follows, acknowledged the whole:  
“Sing-Song”—it was thus that his Greatness began—  
“Ere now, you have probably heard of the plan  
Which the Western barbarians of Europe suggest  
For collecting all things which they think they make best

\* But now we reflect on it, these were not new,  
For to give the French President all that's his due,  
The plots he gets up have the same slight foundations  
As the Emperor's, which clearly were mere adaptations.

† But although in Great Britain in that way we treat them,  
It's not safe in China, a place where they eat them.



AS THE EMPEROR FELT IN NO BETTER CONDITION,  
HE DETERMINED TO CALL IN AND KILL A PHYSICIAN.



Into one of their towns—and I venture to state,  
That with Pekin compared, it's but one tenth as great—  
After which, they'll be modest enough to proclaim  
That to rank with their nations our East has no claim.  
Well! although from our empire these English live far,  
I want to have news of their Western bazaar;  
And as to all countries a challenge they send,  
I think that our nation should send them a friend;  
And yet satisfaction I scarcely shall get  
If a man I select whom you've probably met.  
I mean Congou."

"The Emperor always is wise,"  
Answered Sing-Song, although nearly dumb with surprise.  
"Except what he says there is nothing that's true;  
Except what he thinks there is nothing that's new!  
Can the Emperor allow any mortal so weak  
As the Emperor's slave for one moment to speak?"  
"I want," said the Emperor, "I want to be told  
What you think of old Congou?" "Then let me make bold,"  
Returned Sing-Song, "to say that your Majesty's just  
In believing that Congou's unworthy of trust.  
When you first thought of sending so utter a wretch,  
You judged of his worth, perhaps, by what he would fetch.  
And as Congou on every occasion will steal,  
No doubt if he goes he'll bring back a great deal.

But reflect if to England a sample's despatched,  
Having flaws of a nature that ne'er can be matched,  
It will go a long way to establish the fact  
That the whole of our China is hopelessly cracked."

Then the Emperor thus: "I was ne'er sentimental;  
I think that death-punishment's most instrumental  
In preserving a healthy condition of feeling;  
In fact, there's no law I e'er thought of repealing.  
So I flatter myself my ideas are not new;  
But there's one act of harshness I never could do:  
I could not thrust forth from our much favoured clime  
A man who had never committed a crime.  
When I send one in barbarous countries to pine,  
It's because he's not fit to be strangled in mine.  
But to England, the soil of the gloomy and sad,  
Where the climate and cookery are equally bad,—  
To England, a land of perpetual fog,  
Where the dog-fanciers even don't fancy roast dog;  
Where the bird-nests are cared for by none but the boys,  
Who instead of devouring them treat them as toys;  
Where the tam-tam is silent, unsounded the gong;  
Where the feet of the women are eight inches long;  
Where opinions in faith are forbidden to none,  
And the number of wives is restricted to one,—



'T is not to this country, oh, nothing like this,  
That I'd send a mere culprit, however amiss.  
'T is only a criminal worthy of death  
I could drive to such barbarous lands to draw breath.  
And as some one *must* go, 't was but right to think first  
Of old Congou, of all of my subjects the worst ;  
For, to find out how far all they boast of is true,  
I must send there a Chinese to take his own view.  
You know ' seeing 's believing.' "

“ Allow me one word,”

Returned Sing-Song. “That saying seems here quite absurd ;  
For when Congou returns can his oath be received ?  
He'll be ' seen,' but you know that he can't be ' believed.'  
Now I feel that unless I make certain your cure,  
My existence, as doctor, will not be secure ;  
So suppose you depart from your rule, to befriend me,  
And, instead of beheading, to England you send me.  
You'll have two men to tell you of all that is done,  
And you know that two heads are much better than one ;  
And there 's one head I know of, in every case,  
Will feel better if left in its natural place.”

“ Well,” the Emperor replied, “ p'rhaps this great Exhibition  
Would be treated much better by you, a physician,  
Than by Congou ; whose brains are not quite of the sort  
To make me put faith in his own sole report :

To see double, of course I shall thus be compelled,  
But Chinese in their cups can be never excelled.  
So, Sing-Song, I keep you to what you have said—  
You must now take the journey, or I'll take your head.  
And pack up at once, without stopping to grieve—  
I give you permission at once to take leave.  
Before you depart eat a perroquet's wing,  
Or the leg of a dog, if you have such a thing;  
For, though you consent to eat Englishman's prog,  
If you've love for yourself, you of course love your dog.

“When arrived, take a calm, philosophical view  
Of all that the English barbarians do.  
Have an unconfused look at each great institution,  
Like a Chinese whose sentiments all are *Confucian*;  
And if the barbarians attempt to be grand,  
Of course you'll stand up for your own native land!  
You can say we discovered the power of steam,  
That gunpowder ages ago was our dream;  
And as their new telegraph's making a fuss,  
Explain how they took the whole notion from us.  
If to make them believe it you have not the tact,  
Leave fiction alone, and descend to plain fact.  
Praise the eyes of our women, the fairest of fair,  
Say their lashes seem made to drive men to despair—

You can't lift their eyelids too high—say each lass  
Has pupils which stand very high in their class ;  
Say their feet are as slender as others are thick,  
That their locks are the loveliest mortal could pick ;  
And if sometimes you state rather more than is true,  
You will only be stating a patriot's view.  
Then, concerning this great Exhibition, take pains  
To discover the very best things it contains ;  
For I 'm anxious, as Congou's commands are the same,  
To know what sort of objects you 'll each of you name.  
Contributions from China you 'll see without doubt,  
But of course you 'll be truly impartial throughout.  
By Congou, I know that you will not be led,  
Though Congou 's a man with a very long head ;  
But I fancy in seeing strange lands he 'll be prone  
To imagine that nothing can equal our own.  
For he said ere he left me, whatever they try,  
' The barbarians will be but barbarians for aye.' ”—

And Sing-Song took oath to report what was true,  
And of all things to take a philosopher's view,  
And to give unto China no more than its due.

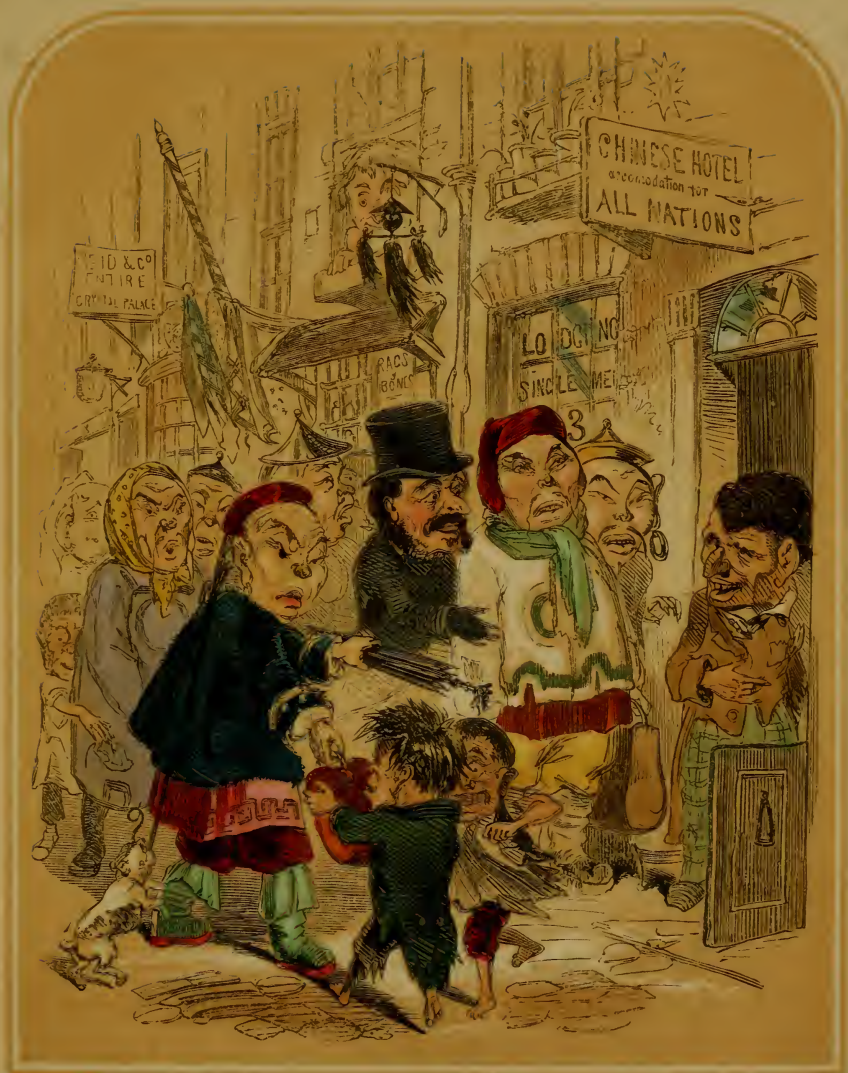
## II.

IN Pekin many a bill was seen—

Informing those who felt aversion  
To prices high, that there had been,  
A project for a cheap excursion  
To England's capital: indeed,  
A "run across" had been devised,  
And those who wished to run, might read  
The terms in which all charges were comprised.

The price in Chinese numbers sounds  
So strange, we'll say it was put down  
At less than twenty thousand pounds,  
And rather more than half-a-crown.  
For, in a journey of the kind,  
However great the traveller's care is,  
When could he e'er exactly find  
What the expense, or even what the fare is?

Our two Chinese perused the bill,  
And thought the trip was very cheap.  
The plan was this:—On Saffron Hill  
Celestial travellers to keep



THE PLAN WAS THIS:—ON SAFFRON HILL,  
CELESTIAL TRAVELLERS TO KEEP.





For something less than they would pay  
To live at Long's, or at Mivart's;  
And, to save coach-hire every day,  
To drive them round—not through—the park in carts.

And works were sold in which 't was shown  
How for a pound or two a-day  
A careful Chinese once was known  
In London to have paid his way.  
These books the strictest saving taught,  
And, though high priced, in worth were small;  
So that in saving, many thought,  
One step was—not to buy the books at all.\*

Our travellers, then, were both enrolled  
For cheap excursions, and set sail  
To India; where, of course, they 're told  
They just have missed the Indian mail.

\* In France a pamphlet thus was printed,  
To teach French visitors the way  
To live, and not be too much stinted,  
In London, for two crowns a-day.  
In Leicester Street and Leicester Square,  
We think some Frenchmen must contrive  
To live on less; but who shall dare  
Into that awful mystery to dive?

And fear came over both their hearts,  
As they remembered many a story  
Of men who'd been to foreign parts  
By cheap excursions. For 't is said  
They left in youth, but were delayed  
So long, that, ere the trip was made,  
The travellers with age were hoary.

But our Chinese *did* start at last,  
And, having o'er the desert passed,  
Sailed to Marseille, then railed to Calais;  
And thence a joyful look they cast  
On to the land which held the Crystal Palace.

As for the pace, which Sing-Song thought was slow,  
Congou declared it was a deal too fast.  
But Congou wanted to get up a show  
In every town of France through which they passed.  
For he believed much cash might be amassed  
If he exhibited, where'er he went,  
Himself all in his native dress arrayed.\*

\* The Chinese family, of late  
In London, now in Paris, state,  
That by that system, they intend  
To see the world from end to end.  
It must please them to think, wherever they go,  
For their money they'll always have some one to show.

And, by this plan, the cunning Chinese meant  
His travelling expenses should be paid ;  
Besides which, Sing-Song much would hate such trade.

Though, as we said, 't was in the self-same ship  
The couple started, still—we know not whether  
'T was Congou's fault or Sing-Song's—through the trip  
They did n't seem to get along together ;  
But then no birds were they of the same feather.  
And in an hour or less you might have seen them  
Keeping from one another very wide,  
So that no understanding was between them ;  
But then, again, it cannot be denied,  
The understanding ne'er was great on either side.

But Congou certainly at first did try  
Some observations on the state of trade,  
To which great Sing-Song deigned not to reply,  
Nor would he "cotton" to whate'er was said  
Of silks, though the remarks were wisely made.  
Opium had no effect, and when at last  
Congou made one attempt to bring up tea,  
Sing-Song's impatience was all bearing past :  
He told his fellow-countryman to be ——  
(The word cannot be printed, but begins with "d.")

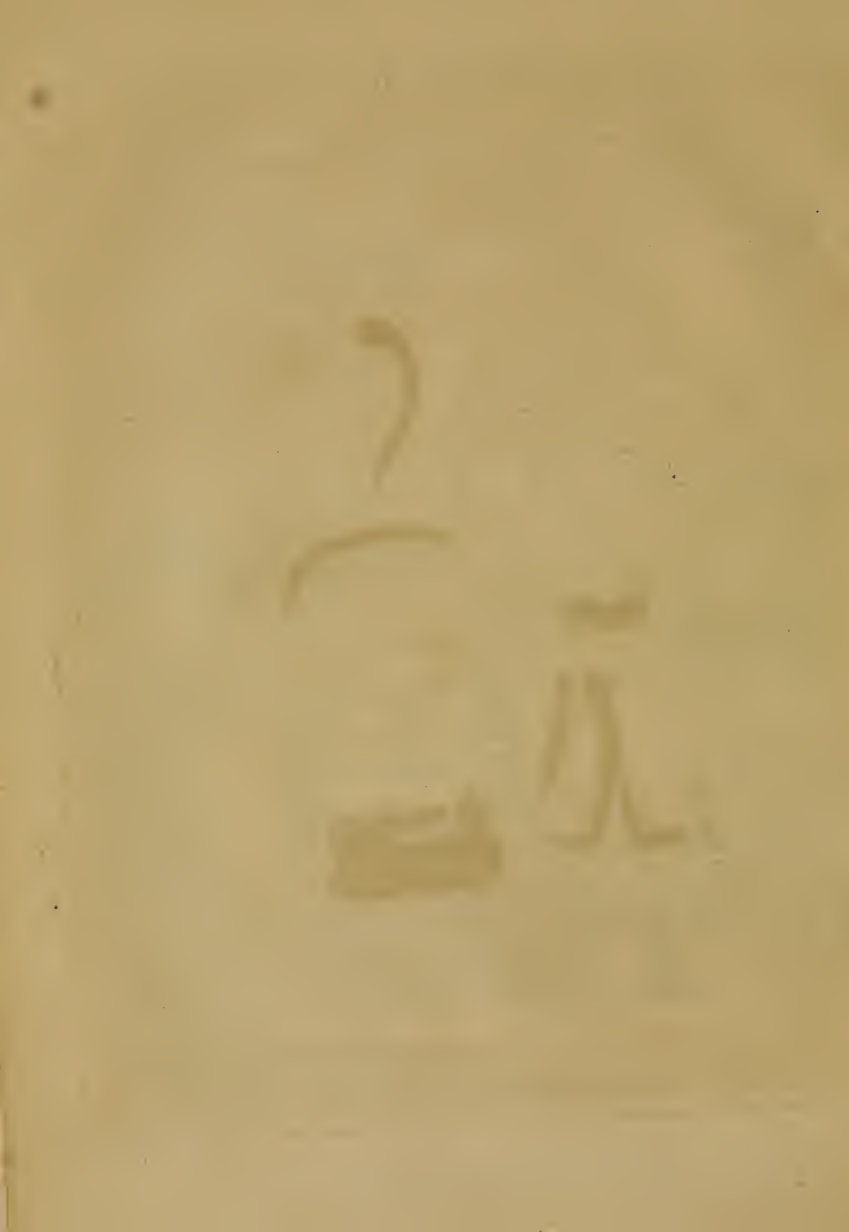
Had he touched porcelain then a further break  
     Might have occurred, and fans without a doubt  
 Would but have tended a fresh breeze to make ;  
     So Congou, caring not to put him out,  
     Left Sing-Song by himself to walk about.  
 'T was clear he ne'er would get the least replies  
     From the old sage, whatever might befall ;  
 And Congou was, of course, a deal too wise,  
     In hopes of conversation e'er so small,  
     To speculate on things which "answered nòt at all."

And thus, as before we have stated,  
     Arrived in Great Britain the pair,  
 Each hating the other, and hated ;  
     And as they approached the "World's Fair,"  
 It appeared very clear, that whatever  
     In England the couple might see,  
 The opinions of either would never  
     On one single topic agree.





AND THUS, AS BEFORE WE HAVE STATED,  
ARRIVED IN GREAT BRITAIN THE PAIR.



### III.

HAVING on Sing-Song's wisdom laid some stress,  
We think it time to say, he thought not less  
Because he seldom spoke. For his sagacity  
Showed itself not in words, but our veracity

Settles that point. He *was* wise : if there live  
Some sceptics who e'en now presume to doubt,  
Let them believe, or let them go without,  
Our word is all the proof that we shall give.

Congou, again, whose intellect's been rated  
At rather a low mark, although an ass,  
Was just the sort of man who would get *feted*  
By fashionable folk, with whom he'd pass  
As a "distinguished foreigner;" and times  
Are such, that it's quite near enough the truth,  
To say, he *was* distinguished, though, in sooth,  
Not for his worth, or talents, but his crimes.

Congou without a *sous* could live as well  
As Sing-Song, rich ; and, as he saw some danger  
Of poverty, he thought 't would be as well  
To play the part of the "illustrious stranger"

Without delay. And therefore, he assumed  
Such airs, that all he visited presumed  
He must have moved in very high society;  
And then he formed so pleasing a variety  
Amongst Italians, Germans, and the rest  
Of foreigners (all more or less distressed),  
That soon among the circles, called the best,  
Congou was welcomed as a favoured guest.

Gladly would he in Germany or France  
Have eaten at the *table d'hôte* of chance.  
In Paris or Berlin he might have tried  
In vain to borrow money for a ride;  
But here in London, city of the free,  
He found himself at perfect liberty,  
As far as dining went, to suit his will—  
To choose his host, and never pay his bill.  
While half-a-dozen people made proposal  
To place their carriages at his disposal.

And as he knew that if they thought him poor,  
In vain he 'd beg his bread from door to door,  
He took some pains reports abroad to send<sup>11</sup>  
That he could boast of treasures without end.





CONGOU WAS ASKED TO DINNER IN GREAT STATE,  
AND THEN PRESENTED WITH A PIECE OF PLATE.



(And so he could, and did, boast every day,  
Although the fact was quite the other way.)  
And when 't was heard that he was vastly rich,  
Enthusiasm reached to such a pitch,  
That all his friends resolved, without dissent,  
A testimonial they must now present—  
That only by a general subscription  
Could merit of so solid a description  
Be ever duly honoured. Thus, ere long  
(The public feeling being very strong),  
Congou was asked to dinner in great state,  
And then presented with a piece of plate.

And when the first of May arrived,  
Congou still kept his high position,  
Nor had he yet at all contrived  
To think about the Exhibition;  
While Sing-Song of nought else could dream.

But Sing-Song's name reminds us now  
That we shall most neglectful seem,  
Unless we mention where and how  
He lived. We left him at the railway station  
With Congou; thence we take up our narration:—

The worst friends, like the best, must part !

Our friends were quickly parted,  
And each Chinese reporter on  
His own account soon started.

But while in "circles" quite select  
One lived without a care,  
The other with much trouble found  
Rooms in a common square.

For Sing-Song had but just arrived,  
When straight he sought his bed,  
But sought in vain—no place he found  
Where he could rest his head.

He looked so strange, and everywhere  
They had so little nouse  
They thought that if he hired a room,  
'T would lower the whole house.

Where he knew rooms were vacant, all,  
He always found some let—  
Some "let or hindrance," that 's to say,  
Which all his hopes upset.

In vain interpreters explained,  
    'T was all of no avail ;  
They heard his story calmly,  
    But objected to his tail.

Yet great delight was everywhere  
    By Congou's dress created ;  
For *his* friends in absurdities  
    Had all been educated.

And thus on Prince Napoleon's tuft  
    Some dames at Court might doat ;  
While if in Covent Garden seen,  
    'T would raise a cry of "goat !"

At last, when Sing-Song found a place  
    Where they would let him stop,  
'T was with a tea-dealer, who thought  
    He 'd look well in the shop.

At night within the cab he slept  
    In which he 'd had his ride,  
But finding the interior dear,  
    He had to go outside.

Hot water in the morn was brought  
By members of the force ;  
The “ box ” held soap and razors,  
There were towels on the horse.

A mattress or a feather-bed,  
Of course, was never kept :  
But when the cash ran very short,  
On tick the lodgers slept.

Now, having paid his fare next day,  
Old Sing-Song sadly went his way,  
And, ere the night arrived, by happy chance,  
And payment of some money in advance,  
Contrived the favour of a host to win,  
Who lived in Leicester Square,  
And there,  
On twice the usual terms, he took him in.

The inconveniences that happened then  
Were numerous,  
And Sing-Song, being like most other men,  
Saw nothing humorous  
In misadventures to himself occurring.

Thus when he put his costume out at night,  
Thinking next morn 't would be returned all right.  
The dress of some barbarian had been thrown  
Upon the chair which should have held his own.

And none can wonder at the man's preferring  
His own soft shoes \* to clumsy leather boots,  
Of all our European corns the roots.  
Nor did he like to find his clothes replaced  
By clothes which must be buttoned or tight laced ;  
For, spite of all our freedom, let 's confess  
We have not too much liberty in dress.

But Sing-Song, though he thus was teased,  
Was altogether not displeased  
With London, and ere many days  
Liked the barbarians' chief city,  
And looked on all their savage ways  
With a good-natured sort of pity.

\* Though ladies' feet are pinched into deformity,  
The men's preserve their usual enormity.  
The ladies never have a foot to use—  
With men it's "quite another pair of shoes."  
'Tis said of woman's feet this vile constraint  
With Chinese Bloomers forms a great complaint ;  
But really Nature's laws are so imperious,  
It must have caused complaints a deal more serious.

That Congou liked it less, is clear  
 From various statements which appear  
 In the report he made at Pekin,  
 Each line of which we see the sneak in.

For instantly the two Chinese returned,  
 The Emperor, who for information burned,  
 Summoned them both and told them to declare  
 If aught they'd seen in Britain or its "Fair"  
 In which that isle with China could compare,  
 And counselling them both to "cut it short,"  
 He called on Sing-Song first for his report.

After the usual salutations,  
 And astronomic observations  
 As to the Emperor's relations  
     With planets, moon, and sun,  
 Sing-Song, who trembled all the while,  
 Related in the following style,  
     What he had seen, and thought, and done



#### IV.

REPORT BY THE MOST LEARNED SING-SONG MADE,  
PHYSICIAN AND PHILOSOPHER BY TRADE.

“ One morn the Crystal Palace gate  
I entered most disconsolate,  
And when I heard the organ’s peal,  
And watched the Crystal Fountain flowing,  
And viewed the Koh-i-Noor so softly glowing,  
While Sax’s horns \* at one end they were blowing,  
And steam-engines in other parts were going,  
I felt in such a scene, there was no knowing  
With which great wonder first to deal.  
But slowly from surprise recovering,  
I quickly set about discovering  
What object among such a host  
Seemed to attract attention most.

\* M. Sax’s monster horn, before receiving its curved form, was about as long as the Lowther Arcade. If an orchestra could have been constructed sufficiently large to contain it, the player, when executing *pianissimo* passages, would have been unable to hear his own music, owing to the distance at which it would have been produced. It would have been interesting, had the instrument been placed in the popular thoroughfare above mentioned, to have seen the executant puffing away in the Strand, unconscious of the admiration which his beautiful notes were creating in Adelaide Street.

[N.B. This note is, by a rare occurrence, written in prose, in consequence of the subject of it being beyond all recognised measure.]

This was the diamond, which the poor  
Benighted folks called Koh-i-Noor ;  
As if an Eastern language could  
By them be ever understood !  
And at this ' Koh-i-Noor ' they 'd stare,  
    As round it all day long they 'd hem,  
And, need I say, of all things there  
    That stone was literally the gem.  
How strange, though, in a spot designed  
For works of industry, to find  
This diamond as chief object placed,—  
That is, unless 't was made of paste !  
But, No ! 'T was from the East it came,  
And now barbarians, without shame,  
Boast of their theft ; and feel a pride  
In that which wiser men would hide.  
Others might veil the crime, and that which shows it,  
The brazen Englishmen themselves expose it !  
In fact, the Englishmen seem friends to stealing,  
And there was no attempt made at concealing  
The admiration felt for a young man,  
Who, it appeared, had hit upon a plan  
For opening any sort of lock at will.  
All to his touch appeared to yield, but, still  
One happy lock, by Indian Bramah blessed,  
Some charm against his instruments possessed—

But still he opened it, though, people say,  
'T was not till fourteen days had passed away.  
And if to open it it took so long,  
In opening it there could n't be much wrong ;  
Since men, whose locks a burglar tries to pick  
For fourteen days, at last suspect the trick.  
And, mighty sovereign, let me tell you now,  
That all locks can be picked—if you know how.  
And human hearts are locks, and you may see  
How each one answers to a different key.  
To open them at once, the only thing  
Is first to find out, then to touch, the spring.  
We meet with hearts so weak, that we may say,  
A straw 's enough to turn them either way.  
Some old ones, clogged with rust, 't were vain to try ;  
Some young ones yield directly to a sigh.  
If nought will move the heart of some proud fair,  
Apply the oil of flattery with care—  
'T will open of itself ! The key is known  
Which acts on all hearts, even hearts of stone ;  
Of course, the Emperor scarcely need be told  
The *passe partout* to all hearts is of gold."

As Sing-Song paused an instant to take breath,  
The Emperor threatened him with sudden death

If he indulged again in disquisition,  
And quickly, thus, continued the Physician :—

“ Having spent in the sculpture department an hour,  
I can speak very well of the Greek Slave by Power.  
To the Yankees, perhaps, it presents this objection,  
It’s suggestive of rather a mournful reflection:  
One thinks of the national absence of heart,

When admiring the genius by Power displayed.  
For, while he takes a slave as a subject for art,

His country takes thousands as objects of trade.  
No doubt but the Emperor’s observed it before,  
But here I’ll take leave to repeat it once more :  
The American sculpture of course should be great ;\*  
For at chiseling the Yankees were always first-rate.

From the female barbarians, I hardly need mention,  
The mirrors attracted a deal of attention.  
Which I grieved for ; since girls may be hurt by the glass,  
As man, by the bottle, is oft made an ass.

\* A Yankee tradesman said to Power one day—  
“ Now, how does this here *sculpting* business pay ? ”  
Power informed the man that every year  
Some fourteen thousand dollars he could clear.  
“ Well,” said the tradesman, “ I’ve a boy, you see,  
Who does not yet know what he wants to be.  
But as he’s old enough a trade to learn,  
And as for carpentering he’s a turn,  
If what you say about the profit’s true,  
I guess I’d better make him *sculpt* like you.”





AND I FOUND THEY ATE DOGS, WHEN I VENTURED TO TRY  
A THING WHICH THEY SOLD AS A MERE MUTTON PIE.



What strange contradictions were seen in each place ;  
For instance, to go into one single case,  
In her surgical instruments France had rewards,  
While she also gained prizes for muskets and swords.  
To promoters of death the same medals they give  
As to those who enable sick mortals to live.

If the affair, we sum up it must be allowed  
To be one of which England may justly be proud ;  
It's a barbarous land, but you find there much good,  
Though the uses of opium are not understood.  
Still e'en in that matter the next generation  
Will doubtless improve, for a late calculation  
Proves that myriads of children drink laudanum each day,  
So the country is now in a promising way.  
And I found they ate dogs, when I ventured to try  
A thing which they sold as a mere mutton pie.

To speak candidly, England's becoming a nation,  
And presents a few points worth our close imitation.  
I think the barbarians have not a bad notion  
Of what they affectedly call locomotion :  
For instance, they've roads on which men have the power  
Of travelling dozens of miles in one hour.  
No doubt that the tales which they tell of the pace  
Have been much overstated in every case ;

But I'm certain that engines of very great force,  
Reach a speed which is greater than that of the horse.  
They've a telegraph, too, which they skilfully use,  
For transmitting in no time a great deal of news ;  
And, although it proceeds from a barbarous clime,  
If you *did* introduce it, you perhaps would save time."

"Enough!" said the Emperor, "now Congou can tell  
If *he* saw aught abroad which he liked half as well."

THE REPORT OF OLD CONGOU, IN WHICH HE EXPLAINS  
THAT THE ENGLISH ARE RATHER DEFICIENT IN BRAINS.

"My opinion," said Congou, "is quickly expressed ;  
You will soon hear which country I think is the best.  
The organs and pianos, which made such a noise,  
Compared with our tam-tams, are nothing but toys.  
Excepting the objects from China, in short,  
There was nothing worth naming in any report.  
Their 'palace' is built like a hot-house, I'm told,  
Because they have summers so dreadfully cold.  
Then the plan of the building is truly absurd—  
This is not my opinion alone, for I've heard,  
From natives of France, Italy, Germany, Spain,  
That *they* could have made it as handsome again.  
And, in England itself, the best men in the land  
Say the whole is a scheme they can't understand!





THE OPENING, IN SHORT, WAS AS DULL AS COULD BE;  
THERE WAS NO EXECUTION WHATEVER TO SEE.

There's Sibthorpe the Colonel, and Laurie the Knight,  
Who opposed the concern from the choice of a site  
To the very last day; and, e'en now, they declare  
That a famine or plague may still end the affair.  
And then, when the building was opened, a blunder  
Was committed, at which our great sovereign will wonder—  
For when the barbarians saw their Queen pass,  
As she went through the Park to the Palace of Glass,  
They shouted and screamed in so noisy a way,  
That in China a man who awoke the next day,  
And discovered his shoulders still carried a head,  
Would have sworn that all justice and law must be dead.  
But then they've a Sovereign with such a faint heart,  
That although there was uproar in every part—  
Though the streets in all places with rabble were filled,  
She sentenced not one of the lot to be killed.  
The opening, in short, was as dull as could be;  
There was no execution whatever to see;  
There was no one impaled, and the use of the saw  
Is not even mentioned in Englishmen's law;  
And the last thing (whatever a miscreant might do)  
Which they'd think of, would perhaps he to saw him in two.  
The classes called upper, appeared not to know  
That the nails of their fingers they ought to let grow.  
'T is thus we Chinese tell the men who ne'er work  
From the low-minded brutes, who from labour can't shirk



Yet, in England, they've classes which sneer at all trading,  
While trade sneers at labour, and thinks it degrading.  
And to show that the Englishman's only a fool,  
He has not yet adopted our finger-nail rule !  
They've however one merit—I'll praise them for that—  
They've some turtle-fed Aldermen, wondrously fat ;  
But although they are fat, when you once leave the city,  
The general thinness quite moves one to pity.  
Altogether, this England showed nothing worth showing,  
And the English know nothing at all that's worth knowing ;  
The best things in London, I saw all along,  
Were some lanterns, and tam-tams, a junk, and a gong.  
Wisdom ceases with us, and, howe'er they may try,  
The barbarians will be but barbarians for aye !”

\* \* \* \* \*

Old Congou, next morn, was a Mandarin made,  
For having his cards so judiciously played ;  
While Sing-Song, for taking a one-sided view,  
Was sentenced forthwith to be severed in two ;  
For the Emperor thus executes many a man,  
Though to do things by halves is not often his plan.  
However, towards Sing-Song he felt some compassion,  
And instead of the punishment then most in fashion,  
The ears of the candid and truth-telling sage  
Were cut off in the prime of a green middle age.









